

FORM B – BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

18-200

ORLEANS

EAS.656

Town/City: Town of Eastham

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): South Eastham

Photograph



Address: 999 State Highway

Historic Name: Clyde L. & Gertrude Becker House

Uses: Present: mixed use/residential & commercial

Original: single-family residence

Date of Construction: ca. 1942

Source: tax records, deeds, Board of Health records

Style/Form: Cape Cod

Architect/Builder: Delbert M. Johnson (owner/bldr.)

Exterior Material:

Foundation: concrete block

Wall/Trim: wood clapboard & shingles/wood

Roof: asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: garage, second dwelling & shed

Major Alterations (*with dates*): rear roof raised to 2 stories (c. 1992); flat roofed right side ell added & subsequently renovated to receive asymmetrical gable roof (post 1985)

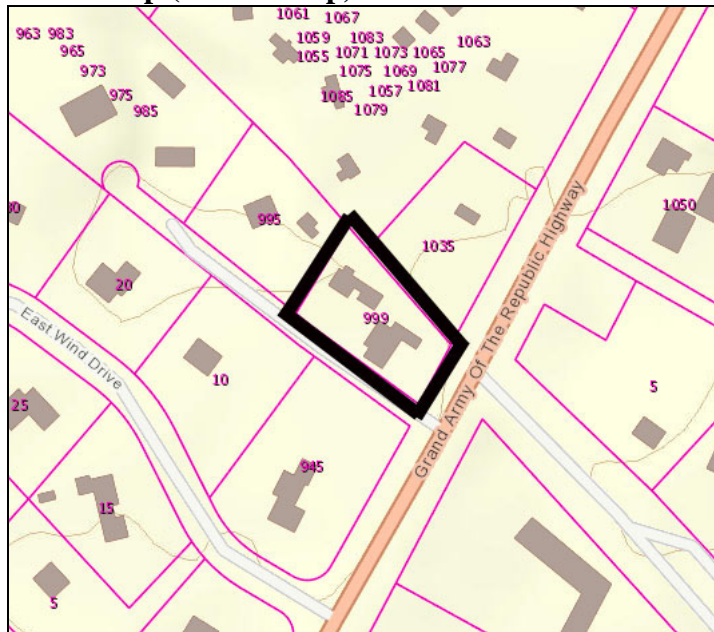
Condition: good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.37

Setting: The subject property is located on the west side of State Highway (Rt. 6/6A). Single family residences occupy parcels to the south and behind it. The Eagle Wind Guest Motel, a large lodging facility is located across State Highway from it and Pine Tree Condominiums in the adjacent tract to the north.

Locus Map (north at top)



Recorded by: Larson Fisher Associates, Inc. with Kathryn Grover

Organization: Eastham Historical Commission

Date: May 2013

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

EASTHAM

999 STATE HIGHWAY

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

EAS.656

☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

The original house constructed on this property appears to have been in the Cape Cod-style with interesting details of wood quoining at the corners and dentiled cornices. The three-bay front facade has a center entrance and is clad with wood clapboard, and there is a small interior brick chimney. It has a trabeated door surround, the door has a six-light window above vertical panels. Windows on the front and side facade appear to be intact and include eight-over-eight, twelve-over-twelve, and six-over-six sash, and have decorative window blinds. It appears there was an original lean-to that extended along the rear of the house. The sides and various ells and additions are clad with wood shingles. A one-bay-wide by two-bay-deep ell off the left (south) side has an asymmetrical gable roof and is recessed slightly from the front facade of the main section, enough to reveal the quoining. The windows on its side are paired and a skylight has been added to the front, shorter section, of its roof. Another ell off the right side projects well beyond the front facade of the main house section; it originally had a flat roof, but it too received a new asymmetrical gable roof. (See sketches of the proposed gable roof addition, below.)¹ A third major renovation to this house was the raising of the rear portion of the roof to two-stories to allow for two lodging units with separate entrances from a second story wood balcony, above the earlier rear lean-to, which has an exterior wood stairway to grade.

A detached two-stall garage with front gable roof is set to the right and rear (northwest) of the house and is accessed via an unimproved driveway off State Highway. It is clad with wood shingles to match the house, but it appears its original vehicular doors have been replaced with metal overhead doors. It has a small lean-to on the right side. The entire garage appears to have been a later construction, but no building permit for it, or for other changes, was located.

The property also includes a small cottage behind the house that has a gable roof, an enclosed full front porch with side entrance, and a small gabled extension on its east side. It is located immediately behind the garage and separated from it by a privacy fence. It is clad with wood shingles like the garage and house.

A shed is located in the far northeast corner of the property.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Taken together, deeds and tax records indicate that the house at 999 State Highway was built between February 1941 and 1947. Elizabeth Knowles Edwards, the remarried widow of Nelson Munroe Knowles, and her two sons sold a lot, 175 by 100 square feet, divided from the family property to Clyde Linton Becker in 1941.² Becker was a native of Middleborough who had lived in Harwich in 1935 and was living in Orleans at the time of the acquisition. That there were no buildings on the lot is clear from the deed, which states that the land could not be used "directly or indirectly for any other than residential purposes for a period of fifty years" and that any dwelling built on the lot in that time could cost no less than \$2700 to build. Since an application to the Eastham Board of Health to change the use of the property from residential to a motel and cottage colony was made in 1992, it is likely that 1942 was the year the house was constructed.³

Born in 1917, Clyde L. Becker was the son of German immigrant jewelry manufacturer Otto P. Becker and his wife Mary, who had immigrated in 1886. His wife was a native of Rhode Island. In 1920 the family was living in Middleborough and by 1930 had moved to Harwich. Clyde Becker was a member of the class of 1939 at the Massachusetts Agricultural College at Amherst (though he may not have graduated), and by 1940 he was living in Orleans and working as a telephone company lineman. His wife Gertrude M. Vickery, born in 1914, was a native of Turners Falls in western Massachusetts.

Tax records for 1947 show Becker with a 0.4-acre lot (the 175x100-square-foot parcel) and a house valued at \$3000. This appears to be what a 1952 subdivision plan shows as parcel 1 and a portion of what was a 20-foot driveway (now Intonti Way) by 1952. Becker made the subdivision plan in part because in the same year he sold a middle lot, accessible to State Highway by the 20-foot-wide cul-de-sac, to Percy H. and Mabel L. Vickery, his father- and mother-in-law. The plan also clarified the boundaries between Becker's land and an 8.266-acre parcel just south of it owned by George C. W. and Bridget Robbie of Auburn since 1948. In April 1952 the Robbies transferred title to the three lots and way shown on the 1952 plan to Becker; the deed simply clarified in writing the boundary lines shown on the plan, as Knight and Edwards appear to have deeded parts of the same land to both the Robbies and Becker.⁴

¹ Town of Eastham records, undated sketches & elevational drawings for Donald Intonti on file. The right side projecting ell conceivably could have originally been a one-car garage (due to its 12-by-20 foot footprint, a typical size for early garages) since renovated to living space.

² Elizabeth Knowles Edwards and Raymond N. Knowles, Eastham, and Charles M. Knowles, Providence RI, to Clyde Linton Becker, 20 February 1941, Barnstable County Registry of Deeds (hereafter cited as BCD) 576:416. Edwards was originally Elizabeth A. Whittemore, a native of Lynn whose first husband, Elmer Gill, died in 1893 two years after they married. In 1898 she married an Eastham farmer and fisherman, Nelson M. Knowles (1858-1903), son of Edmund L. and Pamela Smith Knowles. The couple had two sons, Raymond Nelson, born in 1899, and Charles Munroe, born in 1902. After Nelson Knowles's death, Elizabeth married again and was widowed again by 1940, when she lived with her son Raymond and his wife Florence on State Highway, probably #780.

³ Town of Eastham records: Board of Health voted to approve a change of use from residential to motel and cottages.

⁴ George C. W. and Bridget M. Robbie, Auburn, to Clyde L. Becker, 28 April 1952, BCD 802:552.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

EASTHAM

999 STATE HIGHWAY

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

EAS.656

By 1954 Becker had built two houses on the westernmost third lot in his subdivision; tax records for that year show him as owner of 1.7 acres, three houses, and a garage. A 1956 resubdivision plan shows these two houses on the third parcel and 999 State Highway and its garage on the first parcel abutting State Highway.⁵

In 1963 Becker sold the first and third lots in his small subdivision to Delbert M. Johnson Sr. and his wife Frances C. C. Johnson. Percy and Mabel Vickery sold the second lot to the Johnsons at the same time.⁶ Delbert Johnson was born in February 1891 in Petittcodiac, New Brunswick (between St. John on the south and Moncton on the north); he emigrated from Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, to Boston with his mother, Alice, and sisters, Hilda and Mabel, in June 1893. His father, Robert, had already settled in Boston a year or two before. By 1900 Delbert's father was working as a teamster in Boston, and in 1910 the family was residing in Somerville, where Robert Johnson drove a milk wagon. In 1914 in Somerville Delbert Johnson married Frances Clifton Crosby Eldridge, a native of Roslindale whose mother, Fannie C. Foster, was from Brewster. By 1920 Delbert Johnson was working as a bank bookkeeper in Boston, and he and his wife had one child, four-year-old son Delbert M., Jr. By 1930 Delbert Johnson had become a building contractor, and the family lived in Needham. By 1935 they had moved again, this time to Eastham, and the 1940 census shows the Johnsons renting a house probably a bit south of 999 State Highway.

Delbert and Frances Johnson owned 999 State Highway until 1964, when they sold it to Kenneth J. Webb Sr. and his wife Doris of Woodbury, Connecticut. By 1981 it had become the property of John W. and Anne Hill of Wallingford, Connecticut, who owned it until current owner Donald F. Intonti acquired it in 1985.⁷

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Barnstable County Registry of Deeds. Deeds and Subdivision Maps.

Deyo, Simeon L., ed. *History of Barnstable County, Massachusetts, 1620-1890*. New York: H. W. Blake, 1890.

Dudley, Dean (1823-1906). *Historical Sketches of the Towns and Cities of Plymouth and Barnstable Counties, Mass.* Wakefield, MA: Dean Dudley, 1873.

Town of Eastham Tax Commitment Books. 1902-57.

Freeman, Frederick (1799-1883). *The History of Cape Cod: The Annals of Barnstable County and of its Several Towns, Including the District of Mashpee*. 2 vols. Boston : Printed for the author by Geo C. Rand & Avery, 1860-1862.

Kittredge, Henry C. *Cape Cod: Its People and Their History*. 1930. Reprint. Orleans, MA: Parnassus Imprints, 1968.

Lowe, Alice Albert. *Nauset on Cape Cod: A History of Eastham*. Falmouth, MA: Eastham Historical Society. 1968.

Massachusetts Department of Conservation, Cape Cod Commission, and Boston University. *Heritage Landscape Inventory Report: Eastham, Massachusetts*. Massachusetts Heritage Landscape Inventory Program, December 2010.

Massachusetts Historical Commission. "Reconnaissance Survey Report: Eastham." Typescript, Massachusetts Historical Commission, Boston, 1984.

McKenzie, Matthew. *Clearing the Coastline: The Nineteenth-Century Ecological and Cultural Transformation of Cape Cod*. Hanover, NH, and London: University Press of New England, 2010.

Pratt, Enoch. *A Comprehensive History, Ecclesiastical and Civil of Eastham, Wellfleet and Orleans, County of Barnstable, Mass., from 1644-1844*. Yarmouth, MA: W. S. Fisher and Company, 1844.

Thompson, Elroy Sherman. *History of Plymouth, Norfolk and Barnstable Counties, Massachusetts*. 3 vols. New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1928.

Trayser, Donald G. *Eastham, Massachusetts, 1651-1951: Eastham's Three Centuries*. Lexington, MA: Hancock Press for Eastham Tercentenary Committee, 1951.

MAPS

Walling, Henry F. *Map of the Counties of Barnstable, Dukes and Nantucket Massachusetts Based upon the Trigonometrical Survey of the State*. New York: D. R. Smith and Co., 1858.

Official Topographical Atlas of Massachusetts Compiled and Corrected by H. F. Walling and O. W. Gray. Boston: Stedman, Brown and Lyon, 1871.

Atlas of Barnstable County, Massachusetts. Boston: George H. Walker and Co., 1880.

Atlas of Massachusetts from Topographical Surveys Made in Co-operation by the United States Geological Survey and the Commissioners of the Commonwealth 1884-1888. Boston: Commissioners of the Commonwealth, 1890.

Atlas of Barnstable County, Massachusetts . . . from Official Plans and Actual Surveys. Boston: Walker Lithograph and Publishing Co., 1905, 1910.

SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGES

⁵ See "Plan of Land in Eastham, Mass. Defining the Boundaries As Claimed by Clyde L. Becker & George C. W. Robbie et ux," April 1952, Barnstable County Registry of Deeds Plan 103:129 (hereafter cited as BCP) and "Resubdivision of Land in Eastham, Mass. As Surveyed for Clyde L. Becker," December 1956, BCP 132:137.

⁶ Clyde L. Becker to Delbert M. Johnson Sr. and Frances C. C. Johnson, 15 June 1963, BCD 1207:448; Percy H. and Mabel L. Vickery to Johnsons, 15 June 1963, BCD 1207:446.

⁷ Delbert M. Johnson Sr. and Frances C. C. Johnson to Kenneth J. Webb Sr. and Doris R. Webb, 5 June 1964, BCD 1254:356; Webbs to Lucie and Paul Peterson, 22 February 1973, BCD 1840:15; Petersons to John W. and Anne Hill, 22 May 1981, BCD 3295:58 and 3295:56; Anne Hill to Donald F. Intonti, 5 April 1985, BCD 4478:153.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

EASTHAM

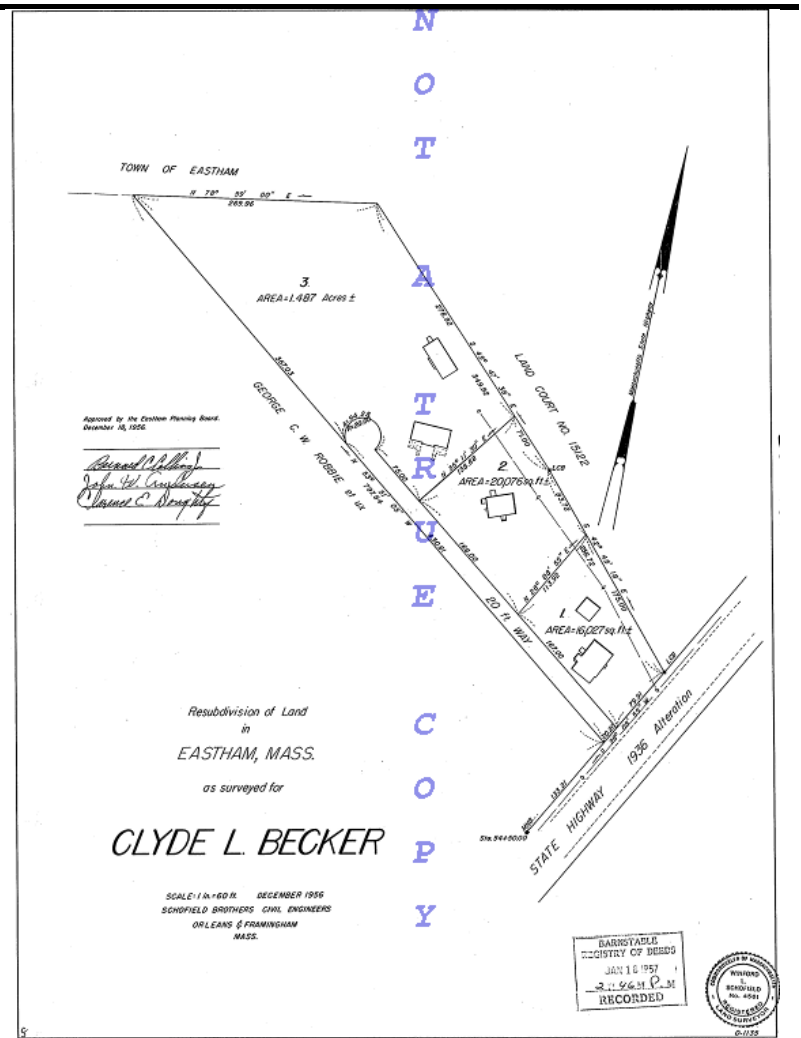
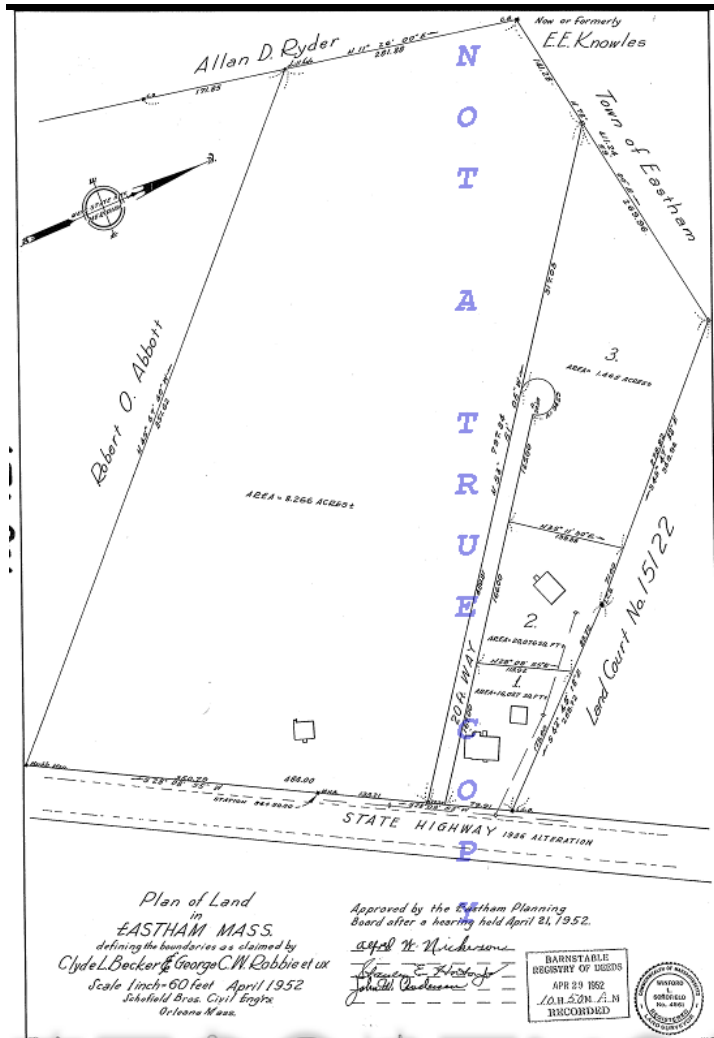
999 STATE HIGHWAY

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

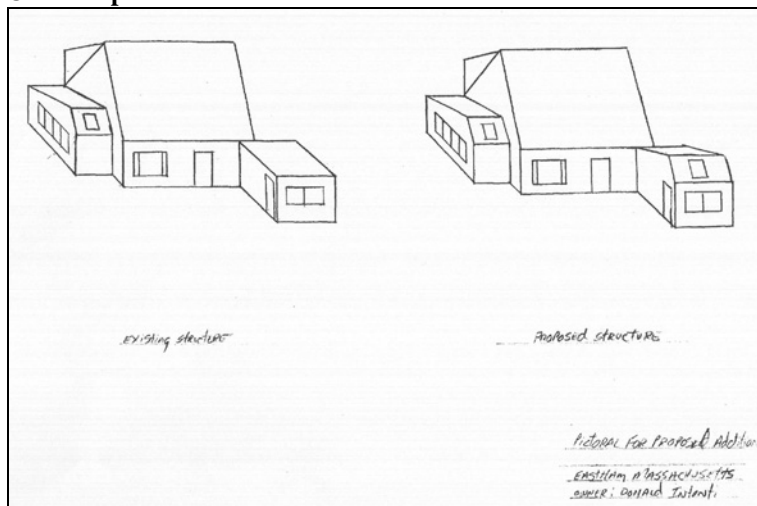
Area(s) Form No.

EAS.656

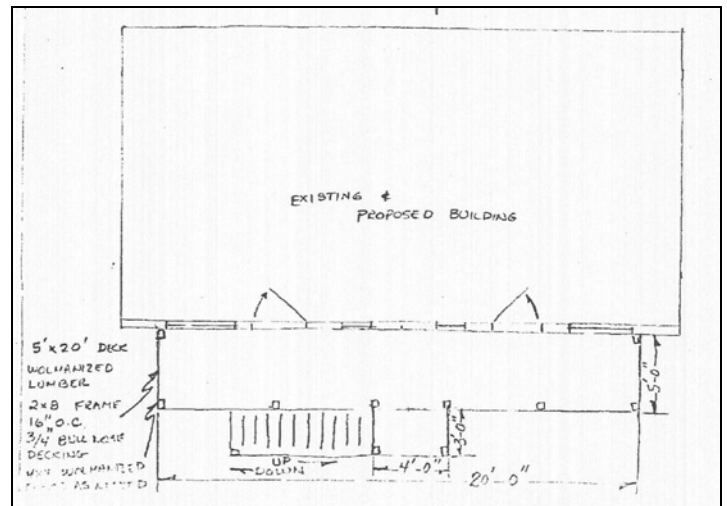


Becker plan of 1952 (BCP 103:129), left & Becker subdivision of 1956 (BCP 132:137), right. On both 999 State Highway is Parcel 1 at bottom.

Undated plans of alterations for Donald Intonti:



Change to roof of projecting front ell.



Plan of second story rear expansion.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

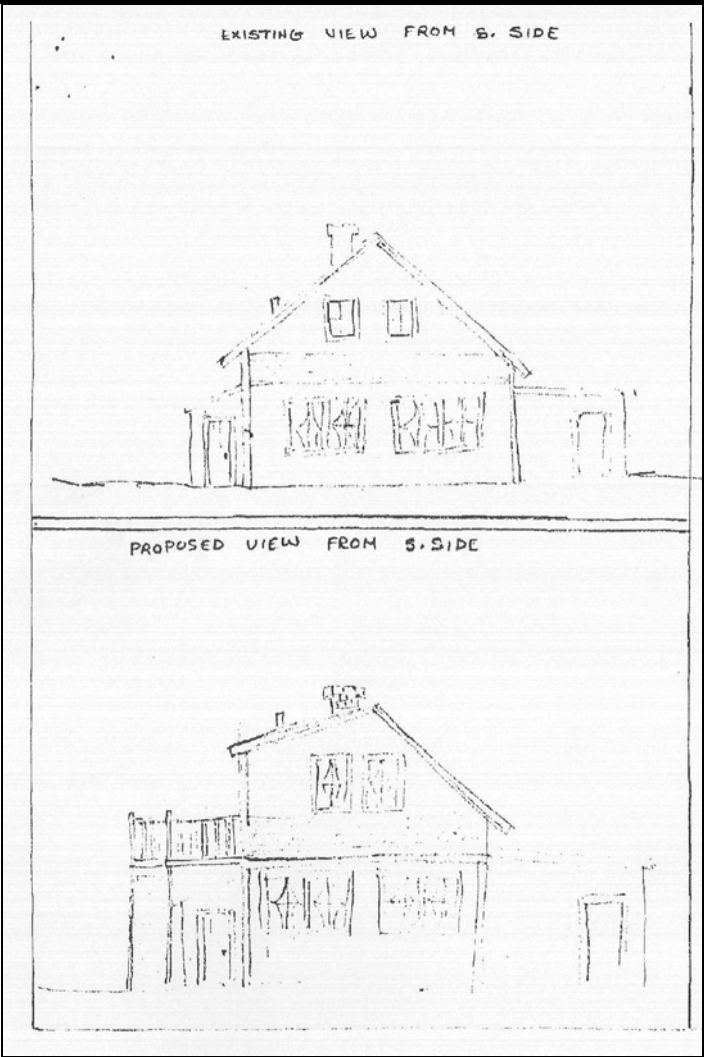
EASTHAM

999 STATE HIGHWAY

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

	EAS.656
--	---------



Elevational drawings of second story rear expansion and balcony addition.

PHOTOGRAPHS

(credit Larson Fisher Associates, 2012-2013 unless otherwise noted)



Aerial view from south (photo courtesy of Bing Maps).

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

EASTHAM

999 STATE HIGHWAY

Area(s) Form No.

	EAS.656
--	---------



View from northeast.



Internet photo of cottage located behind garage; view from southwest.



View from northwest.